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Declaration of Nicole Fritz

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provide support on a specific case-by-case basis, its objectives also include the provision of human rights law training to human rights and civil society actors within the region. I have personal knowledge of the following facts, except where I refer to an experience of another person, and in that case I have personal knowledge of the chilling impact of that and other experiences on myself and other workers within the human rights community in Southern Africa.

- 2. In many places in southern Africa – notably Zimbabwe, Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo – individuals who seek to identify and publish human right violations or government wrongdoing run the risk of severe reprisals, including incarceration, assault and torture. In early 2007, Sarah Wykes, of the anti-corruption group Global Witness was held in detention in Angola for several weeks on charges of espionage. In reality she had simply met with several local groups in Angola's oil-rich Cabinda province in order to discuss revenue transparency relating to oilproduction.
- 3. Information, particularly as it relates to economic transparency, and indeed, even basic government functioning, is especially difficult to obtain in contexts where free media is continuously targeted – whether by obviously unlawful means such as firebombing of press offices, as has happened in Zimbabwe, or the physical assault of journalists by a government minister, as happened recently in the DRC, or nominally under the colour of law by deploying draconian legislation like criminal defamation laws (in existence in most jurisdictions in southern Africa). In many of the countries, legislation is antiquated and outdated, with no inclusion of or recognition for the importance of modern freedom of information statutes. This absence is compounded by the fact that court systems are notoriously slow, court-ordered discovery is rare and long in coming and, most damningly, that court orders are routinely ignored by governments like Zimbabwe's.
- 4. Given the risks entailed, human rights monitors and analysts experience great difficulty in gathering information and in corroborating and analyzing such information. Experience in Zimbabwe makes this vividly clear: In attempting to document systematically the violations that have occurred over the past year in Zimbabwe, SALC communicates with its partners in Zimbabwe by use

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Executed on February 28 at Johannesburg, South Africa.

of encrypted e-mail services, such as hush-mail, and avoids any communication via media, such as telephones and ordinary e-mail, that we suspect are intercepted and monitored. In the wake of the assaults and torture of democracy and civil society activists that took place in March 2007, lawyers Alec Muchadahama and Andrew Makoni, acting for the victims, were themselves threatened with violence and held in custody without charge, in order, it would appear, to deter them from publicising the violations suffered by their clients.

In these circumstances, there is a definable need for some sort of mechanism 5. which allows for the anonymous transmission and dissemination of information relating to human rights violations and government wrong-doing. It can only be imagined how such mechanism, if widely publicised within southern Africa, might facilitate the transmission of crucial insiderknowledge. For instance, there exist credible reports that a number of individuals within Zimbabwe's law-enforcement and justice structures are disturbed at the orders they receive and the violence and violation that is expected of them in the performance of their duties. A mechanism like Wikileaks would enable them to shed much needed light on command structures, on the type of orders they receive, without fear that they would lose their jobs (particularly acute given Zimbabwe's current economic outlook) or face reprisal.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California and the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct.